

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 TRSE-00 DHA-02 OMB-01 AID-05
COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 EPG-02
SIL-01 /098 W

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R 061340Z JUL 77
FM AMEMBASSY BANGUI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8905
INFO USUN NEW YORK 363
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C O N F I D E N T I A L BANGUI 1408

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PORG, APER
SUBJ: ORGANIZING FOR MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY

REF: STATE 148782

SUMMARY: IN RECENT YEARS THE BOKASSA REGIME HAS BEEN SUPPORTIVE
OF USG POSITIONS ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES. THERE IS NOW A TREND
TO MORE TRADITIONAL NONALIGNMENT AND WE ARE ONLY LIKELY TO GET
THE CAE'S ACTIVE SUPPORT ON ONE OR TWO KEY ISSUES WHEN WE ARE
PREPARED TO MAKE DIMARCHES TO THE EMPEROR DIRECTLY. IN SUCH CASES
BOKASSA IS LIKELY TO ASSUME AN ECONOMIC QUID PRO QUO ON OUR PART.
END SUMMARY

1. HISTORICALLY THE CONSERVATIVE CAE GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN SUPPORTIVE
OF AMERICAN POSITIONS ON ISSUES SUCH AS KOREA, THE MIDDLE EAST
AND RACISM. IN RECENT MONTHS, HOWEVER, THERE HAVE BEEN SIGNS THAT
THE REGIME IS MOVING TOWARDS THE MAINSTREAM OF NON-ALIGNED THINKING.
THE NORTH KOREANS HAVE BEEN PERMITTED TO OPEN AN EMBASSY, THE
ARABS ARE INCREASINGLY VISIBLE AND INFLUENTIAL, AND BOKASSA HAS
BEEN MORE PUBLICALLY CRITICAL OF SOUTH AFRICA. THE RESULT HAS
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BEEN A GROWING DISPOSITION TO ABSTAIN ON MULTILATERAL ISSUES IN
ORDER TO AVOID GIVING OFFENSE TO EITHER SIDE. WE EXPECT THIS TREND
TO BE MAINTAINED AND THAT IN FUTURE THERE WILL BE FEWER OCCASIONS
ON WHICH WE WILL GET DIRECT GOCAE SUPPORT.

2. BOKASSA IS, HOWEVER, SUSCEPTIBLE TO EXTERNAL INFLUENCES FROM
CONSERVATIVE AFRICAN LEADERS SUCH AS HOUPHOUET AND MOBUTU.

TO THE DEGREE THAT THEY AND OTHER MODERATE STATES ARE WILLING TO STAND UP AND BE COUNTED ON OUR SIDE, THE MORE LIKELY IT IS THAT BOKASSA WILL AUTHORIZE HIS DELEGATIONS TO SUPPORT US. EQUALLY IF WE CAN PERSUADE THE FRENCH, WHO FINANCE OVER HALF THE DEVELOPMENT BUDGET, TO LOBBY ON ISSUES OF COMMON CONCERN, WE ARE MORE LIKELY TO HAVE THE SUPPORT OF THE CAE. IN THE PAST, HOWEVER, THE FRENCH HAVE BEEN RELUCTANT TO EXERCISE MUCH PRESSURE ON THE GOCAE.

3. WITH RESPECT TO THE SPECIFIC ISSUES DISCUSSED IN PARA 3 REFTEL, IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO ENGAGE THE CENTRAL AFRICANS IN A VERY MEANINGFUL DIALOGUE. ON NORTH/SOUTH ECONOMIC ISSUES THEY HAVE NO STRONG VIEWS AND WILL GO ALONG WITH THE NON-ALIGNED CONSENSUS. ON UN BUDGET CONTROL, THEY HAVE NO DIRECT INTEREST IN KEEPING SPENDING DOWN SINCE THEY ARE NET RECIPIENTS OF UN RESOURCES. HOWEVER, THEY MIGHT BE RECEPTIVE TO CHANGES IN BUDGET AND STRUCTURE WHICH MADE RESOURCES MORE EFFECTIVE AND INCREASED THE UN'S TEETH TO TAIL RATIO. THEY WILL NOT SUPPORT US ON THE UN BALANCE OF POWER AND SHARE THE DESIRE OF SMALL DEVELOPING COUNTRIES TO SEE THEIR INFLUENCE ENHANCED AT OUR EXPENSE.

4. HUMAN RIGHTS IS AN AREA WHERE WE PARADOXICALLY MAY HAVE MORE SUCCESS. ALTHOUGH THE CAE DOES NOT HAVE A BRILLIANT RECORD ON HUMAN RIGHTS, IT IS AWARE OF OUR CONCERNS AND MAY BE WILLING TO SUPPORT SPECIFIC MULTILATERAL ACTIONS IN THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION AND ELSEWHERE, PARTICULARLY IF WE MAKE IT CLEAR THAT THIS

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IS OUR HIGHEST PRIORITY. THE CAE WILL NOT, HOWEVER, BE ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT ONE MAN-ONE VOTE SOLUTIONS TO SOUTHERN AFRICAN PROBLEMS, SINCE THE EMPEROR SEES THIS AS AN ATTEMPT TO PROJECT SOLUTIONS BASED ON OUR NATIONAL EXPERIENCE INTO SITUATIONS WHICH ARE NOT COMPARABLE. IN ADDITION, WE MUST KEEP IN MIND THE FACT THAT BOKASSA ENJOYS FINANCIALLY PRODUCTIVE RELATIONS WITH SOUTH AFRICA, WHICH HE WILL NOT JEOPARDIZE.

5. THE MOST EFFECTIVE TACTICS HERE ARE TO INFORM THE CENTRAL AFRICANS WELL IN ADVANCE OF OUR POSITIONS IN GENERAL AND THEN TO CHOOSE ONE OR TWO ISSUES WHICH ARE OF SUFFICIENT CENTRALITY TO US TO MERIT MY RAISING THEM WITH THE EMPEROR. HE IS CONCERNED ABOUT HIS RELATIONS WITH US, HE WANTS OUR CONTINUED AID AND HE HAS BEEN RECEPTIVE TO PAST OVERTURES. ACROSS THE BOARD APPROACHES WILL NOT WORK AND IT IS UP TO WASHINGTON TO DECIDE WHERE WE SHOULD BE PUTTING OUR EMPHASIS. IN THE PAST BY CAREFULLY SELECTING THE ISSUE WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GET BOKASSA'S SUPPORT. HIS DECISION TO SUPPORT US WILL BE CONDITIONED ON THE EXTENT TO WHICH HE JUDGES IT WILL NOT AFFECT FINANCIALLY LUCRATIVE ARRANGEMENTS WITH OTHER STATES AND WILL NOT ISOLATE HIM TOTALLY, PARTICULARLY FROM OTHER CONSERVATIVE AFRICAN REGIMES. WE MUST RECOGNIZE, HOWEVER, THAT IN BOKASSA'S MIND THERE IS AN IMPLICIT ASSUMPTION THAT WE WILL

BE SYMPATHETIC TO HIS CONCERNS IF HE IS RESPONSIVE TO US ON
MULTILATERAL ISSUES. THUS A CONTINUATION AT ROUGHLY CURRENT LEVELS
OF OUR AID PROGRAM IS THE SINE QUA NON OF AN EFFECTIVE AND
COLLABORATIVE POLITICAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CAE.
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